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SUBJECT Soviet Technology Spies

MAX ROBINSON: An Idaho jury today began considering the case of a woman accused of helping convicted spy Christopher Boyce during a 19-month bank robbing spree. The robberies occurred after Boyce escaped from prison, where he was serving a 40-year sentence for espionage. He had been selling satellite secrets to the Russians, prime information in a world where high-technology secrets can be just as important as anything stolen from the military.

Who are the spies and how do they infiltrate this country?

JOHN MARTIN: The American intelligence community is alarmed, it says, about an elaborate conspiracy from abroad aimed at Congress, scientists, and American business executives.

ADMIRAL BOBBY INMAN: Since the early 1970's, the Soviets and their surrogates among the East Europeans have been increasingly using their national intelligence services to acquire Western civilian technology.

LAWRENCE BRADY: They buy what they can. What they can't get, they'll steal. And if they have problems meshing the two, then they get the information through a different way.

MARTIN: This is a man who stole. He was a spy in the United States for an East European country we agreed not to identify. Until he defected, he says, he was controlled by the Soviet KGB.

MAN: I came here under diplomatic cover to work in the United Nations.

MARTIN: You worked and lived in this country under that

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MARTIN: How?

MAN: By just doing it.

MARTIN: In a car with diplomatic license plates, he said, and without revealing his nationality.

MAN: Nobody asked me. We were supposed to describe locations and put them on the map with the specific coordinates.

MARTIN: Where did the requests come from?

MAN: They came from Russia.

MARTIN: To warn potential civilian targets, the FBI used an aircraft carrier in San Diego harbor to hold a secret meeting in 1978 with about 70 aerospace executives. But this year the secrecy was gone, and the same message was being delivered openly to electronics executives.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: United States technology, whether it's military or purely industrial, is spy target number one.

MARTIN: Later in Washington, FBI Director Webster estimated that 30 to 40 percent of 600 Soviet Bloc representatives sent here are assigned to gather intelligence. These two Russian Embassy officials, for example, openly attended budget hearings on defense spending some years ago, and were later identified by American intelligence as KGB officers.

Now the presence of so many Soviet agents has become something of a joke in Washington.

ALBERT GORE: We have a sign-up sheet for KGB agents at the back of the room.

MARTIN: But it is no laughing matter to this man, who lives a new life now as a former spy resettled by American intelligence. He warns Americans to be wary.

MAN: Anybody who is involved in some kind of research or scientific work which is very important and could be misused should realize that he should protect it for the interests of the United States.

MARTIN: This American engineer protected classified documents and found himself uncovering a KGB agent.